BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) When the Information Training Centre conducted by Government of India at Dimapur will be started;

(b) whether the present Government has not complied with the assurance of the previous United Front Government to extend assistance to the State Instiutte of Journalism, Imphal conducted by the Publicity Department, Government of Manipur; and

(c) the measures taken up by Government for fulfilling that assurance in the House.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MUKHTAR NAQVI): (a) There is no proposal to start a Information Training Centre by Government at Dimapur.

(b) The previous United Front Government did not give such an assurance.

(c) Does not arise.

Autonomy to Prasar Bharati

97. SHRI AKHILESH DAS:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether having reissued the Prasar Bharati Ordinance, Government have been rethinking on the extent of autonomy to be granted or providing "teeth to it";

(b) if so, what precise issues have been considered in this regard and what decision, if any, has been taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MUKHTAR NAQVI): (a) Government have only sought to restore the provisions of the original Prasar Bharati Act, 1990 through the promulgation of the Prasar Bharati Amendment Ordinance, 1999.

(b) Does not arise.

News-Item Captioned 'DD is Returning to Sycophancy'

98. SHRI NAGENDRA NATH OJHA:
SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Goverment's attention has been drawn to the news-item appearing in the Indian Express dated 20th January, 1999 under the caption "DD is returning to sycophancy"; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MUKHTAR NAQVI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) All programme matters including news telecast by Doordarshan fall within the purview of Prasar Bharati, a statutory autonomous body and the Government do not interfere in such matters. Prasar Bharati have reported that its news bulletins are prepared purely on the consideration of news value of stories and keeping in view its policy guidelines. it has further reported that being national broadcaster, it is the duty of Doordarshan to ensure that sensitive matters particularly those affecting national security or harmonious relations between different communities are covered in a responsible manner keeping in view possible ramifications of their coverages. Whenever the statements of Prime Minister have important news value justifying their inclusion as a top story, it is being done.

Introduction of Direct to Home Telecast

99. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM:
SHRI NAGENDRA NATH OJHA:
SHRI JALALUDIN ANSARI:
SHRI ABANI ROY:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to introduce Direct to Home telecast;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, by when a decision is likely to be taken;

(d) whether the issue of DTH would be delinked from the Broadcasting Bill; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor, and benefits to Doordarshan by allowing DTH in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MUKHTAR